



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V25 N42 October 15, 2023

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Salvation by Grace

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast."

Ephesians 2:8-9



How does trust relate to faith?

I BELIEVE "Perpetual Faith" Proverbs 3:5-6

As we consider *Faith* and its relationship to Salvation by Grace, we must consider the concept of the "object" of our faith. Faith is only as good as what that faith is placed in or upon. If I have faith that I will sit at the table and not on the floor, I place my faith in the object of a chair to hold me up to the table. I have *faith* in the sturdiness and construction of the chair. I do not have faith in the wish that the chair might be able to hold me up as I sit at the table. I may not spend a lot of thought on the chair as the object of my faith, but nonetheless I sit on the chair as the object of my faith in the chair. Faith in the object of my chair is only as good as the trustworthiness of the chair I select to sit on. The object of our faith determines the ultimate effectiveness of our faith.

As Christians, we do not have faith in faith. Faith is not just a feeling, a sensation or a premonition. Faith is not a positive mental attitude that refuses to consider anything negative. Faith is not manifesting some desired outcome or declaring some truth that we want active in our lives. Faith is a connection and trust in something or someone other than faith. The object of a Christian's faith is none other than Jesus Christ himself. We have faith in Jesus and his finished work of redemption through his death, burial and resurrection. Because Jesus died for us, we have faith that he has paid the penalty of our sins (2 Cor. 2:9) and makes us alive, raised and seated with him in the heavenly realms (Eph. 2:4-7). Faith that has as its object good works, generosity, morality or spiritual disciplines is a faith that falls short of biblical faith. Faith that seeks to add to Jesus or uses other intermediaries to appeal to Jesus is not faith in Jesus. Jesus alone as the sole source of our salvation and even our sanctification makes our faith legitimate and secure.

Another way to think about faith and its object is the practice of "trust." Trusting is essential for all of life and society. We trust in a multitude of things everyday to transport us, finance us and protect us. "In the final analysis all government, all economics, all currency and

banking, all institutions and all marriages, all relationships between people, are fundamentally governed by trust. Without trust, society deteriorates into paranoia, the feeling that everybody is out to get you" (Paul E. Larsen, *Wise Up and Live*, 12). As trust is essential in our daily lives, even so trust is essential to our walk with God.

Trust is something that has a beginning, but can grow more deeply over time. I may struggle at first to trust that I can swim in the deep end of the pool. I may spend a considerable amount of time debating whether I can trust that my body will float and not sink. But once I jump in the pool and learn that I can trust that my body will float, I can spend a lifetime learning more about swimming, diving, scuba and other water sports. That first expression of "swimming trust" is not final. It is just the beginning. Trusting God also has a "dive-in" date. Faith in God begins at a point of conversion for every believer. But faith or trust does not end there. Trusting God is something that grows, deepens and matures. "There are two sides to the matter of trust. There is the decision of trust and the habit of trust. The first is called 'commitment;' the second is called 'trust.' Trust follows commitment, not always right away, but it begins there. In the middle of our fears we make a decision to trust. This does not immediately bring the habit of trust, but if we will muster the courage to commit our way to God we shall soon learn to trust" (Larsen, 14).

Have you placed your initial trust in Jesus for your salvation? Is Jesus the only one you are trusting for eternal life? How strong is the habit of your trust in God? God may be asking you to trust him with your finances. He may be asking you to trust him with your education or career. He may be asking you to trust him with your relationships, past, present and future. God may be asking you to trust him with a major step of faith that others may think is unwise. Trusting God is never easy. But there is nothing better in the world than making God the primary and sole object of our faith and trust. He promises to lead us as a loving shepherd in the path of trust and faith.

Read Proverbs 3:5-6

5 *Trust in the Lord with all your heart*

and lean not on your own understanding;

6 *in all your ways submit to him,*

and he will make your paths straight. [NIV]

Read in other translations

5 *Trust in the Lord with all your heart,*

and do not rely on your own understanding.

6 *Acknowledge him in all your ways,*

and he will make your paths straight. [NET]

5 *Trust God from the bottom of your heart;*

don't try to figure out everything on your own.

6 *Listen for God's voice in everything you do, every
where you go;*

he's the one who will keep you on track. [MSG]

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Circle each occurrence of a positive call to action in Prov. 3:5-6.
- Draw a box around each occurrence of negative commands in Prov. 3:5-6.
- Draw an arrow from each command to the object of that command in Prov. 3:5-6.
- Underline the modifier of "Trust" in Prov. 3:5.
- Underline the modifier of "Submit" in Prov. 3:6.
- Double underline the end result of Prov. 3:5-6.
- Draw lines from phrases in the NIV version of Prov. 3:5-6 that are different in the NET and MSG versions.

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What is one thing you do not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. To whom is Prov. 3:5-6 specifically written (see Prov. 3:1)? How does this information influence your understanding of Prov. 3:5-6?
2. What is the connection of the LORD to wisdom (see Prov. 1:7, 29; 2:5, 6)?
3. Explain what is meant by “with all your heart” in Prov. 3:5.
4. Compare and contrast the ideas of “trust” and “lean” found in Prov. 3:5.
5. Explain what is unique about the use of “understanding” in Prov. 3:5 compared to its use in the rest of the book of Proverbs.
6. What is meant by “submit” or “acknowledge” found in Prov. 3:6?
7. What does “in all your ways” contribute to the idea of “submit” or “acknowledge” in Prov. 3:6?
8. What is the promise made in Prov. 3:6?
9. How are “ways” and “paths” used elsewhere in Proverbs (see Prov. 2:8, 13, 20; 4:14; 12:28; 15:19)?
10. What is the advantage of a “straight” path for one who trusts in the LORD wholeheartedly?

Commentary On The Text

The book of Proverbs is known to readers of the Old Testament as the repository of Revealed Wisdom. Lessons are found here for young and old on how to live life successfully with as little pain and suffering as possible. The book is typically divided into three or four sections. The first section is often labeled as “Lessons from a Father to His Son.” The first nine chapters of the book of Proverbs contain ten (10) lessons or lectures (with a few excursions) delivered in poetic form for one who is growing and maturing into adulthood. The wisdom found in these 10 lessons is for all ages but is presented in the frame of fatherly wisdom delivered to those not yet wise to this world.

Proverbs chapter three (3) moves from the general pursuit of wisdom to present a theology lesson on the true source of wisdom. “This passage [Proverbs 3:1-10] is the third of ten instruction poems in Proverbs 1-9. True to form, the poem begins with the formulaic admonition, ‘My son, do not forget my teaching.’ What follows are exhortations designed to encourage the learner to grow in ‘trust in the Lord’ (v. 5) and establish a good reputation ‘in the sight of God and man’ (v. 4). This poem only uses the word ‘wisdom’ once, and that with a negative connotation (v. 7). The poem is not directly about wisdom but about stimulating in the listener faith and trust. Notice the vocabulary used in this poem: ‘Trust,’ ‘lean not,’ ‘acknowledge,’ ‘fear,’ ‘honor,’ ‘do not despise,’ ‘do not resent.’ All of these refer to one’s attitude toward God. Reliance on God is the prerequisite for attaining wisdom” (Dave Bland, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes & Song of Songs*, The College Press NIV Commentary, 68).

The word “faith” is never used in the book of Proverbs. “Believe” is used a few times in Proverbs, but does not seem to have the same connotation of “faith” as described in the New Testament. Instead, the word “trust” is used to convey this idea of depending or placing our faith in God. As these proverbial lectures to a son emphasize the importance of searching for and gaining wisdom, the father turns in this third lecture to emphasize that wisdom comes ultimately from God. To pursue wisdom is to learn of God and to trust him deeply. “The father now secures his son in a personal relationship with the Lord in bonding him to his teaching (Prov. 2:6). Since the son had committed himself to the father’s ethical teaching, the father now orders the son to trust the Lord to uphold them. The son’s confidence is neither in an impersonal created order subject to his rational control nor in an impersonal code of ethics inherited by tradition from the fathers but in Israel’s covenant-keeping God who stands behinds the moral order and the heritage and its promises (see also 22:19). Since the teaching is good only to the extent that God backs it up, the disciple must trust (betah, i.e., rely on out of a sense of security, usually in the face of danger) in the Lord (cf. 16:3, 20; 22:19; 28:25; 29:25). Faith in God’s promises and renouncing confidence in oneself (cf. 18:10-11; 28:11, 26)

are unnatural and gifts of God, mediated in part through the admonitions and promises (see 2:6; cf. Rom. 9:14-17; Eph. 2:8-9)” (Bruce K. Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs, Chapters 1-15*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament, 243).

In poetic fashion, Proverbs 3:5 contrasts in antithetical parallelism the idea of trusting God completely while discouraging the natural tendency to lean upon our own understanding. If we are to gain wisdom and benefit from its accumulation we must do so with a heart that is soft and hungry for God. Wisdom gathered without devotion or passionate, heart-felt trust is little more than trivia. The “all” of heart (3:5) and the “all” of ways (3:6) suggest that this devotion and faith is comprehensive. There is no part of our lives, our emotions, our desires or our dreams that does not fall within this experience of trust and dependence upon God. The young person with hands full of hope and the old person with nothing left in their hands need to bring their hearts and their habits to the Lord for his direction, correction and guidance. Faith and trust in God are lifelong and perpetual.

This experience of faith or trust is spoken of as an intimate exchange of knowledge in Prov. 3:6. The word translated “submit” [NIV] in Prov. 3:6 is simply “knowing.” In all our ways, in all of our activities, decisions, contemplations and choices we are to “make these known” to God and seek to “know” his desired will in each of these matters. Some translations use the generic word “acknowledge” in Prov. 3:6. This does not convey the intensity and intimacy of what the father is trying to relate here to his son. We need to pursue God, sharing with him in a comprehensive way everything from the greatest longings of our hearts to even the most mundane choices of day-to-day life.

Just as we would trust God and seek his knowledge in all or our ways, we have faith that God will bless us and help us in our path (Prov. 3:6). “The image of a straight path or way appears approximately twenty times (chiefly in Psalms, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes). Those who continue on the straight path are the ones whose walk is in accordance with God’s walk, while those leaving the straight path are rebels against God and are therefore in danger of his judgment. Scripture’s use of straight conveys a sense of steadfast purpose and clarity of vision provided by God himself (cf. Prov 3:6; 4:11, 25; 11:5; 15:21). The detours to be avoided are not the ones that would be beneficial for enriching one’s life but are unnecessary and damaging because they ignore the standard of God’s character and would have us striking out on our own (cf. Ps 107:7; Prov 2:13; 5:5)” (Leland Ryken, et al., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery*, 819).

Our faith or trust in God is not for just the beginning of our salvation. Faith is essential for conversion. But we seek God daily in faith, looking for his heart to fill our own and to make our way clear and straight through the confusion of a cluttered world. God’s gift of grace saves us, through faith. God through faith also sustains us through our daily ups and downs of life.

Word Studies/Notes

v. 5 **Trust** “This Hebrew verb translated ‘trust’ is cognate with an Arabic verb that means to throw oneself down on one’s face, to lie down spread-eagle in complete reliance” (Raymond C. Ortlund Jr., *Preaching the Word: Proverbs – Wisdom That Works*, ed. R. Kent Hughes, 63). “‘Trust and lean’ - these two words may be even closer together in thought than appears at first sight. G. R. Driver argues that the Heb. for trust had originally the idea of lying helplessly face downwards – an idea preserved in Jeremiah 12:5b (see RSV) and Psalm 22:9b (Heb., 10). Lean is not ‘incline’, but ‘support yourself’, rely (RSV)” (Derek Kidner, *Proverbs: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 17, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, 61).

v. 5 **heart** “Heart in Hebrew refers to one’s emotions (Prov. 12:25; 13:12; 14:10, 13) but more often to his intellect (such as understanding, 10:8; discernment, 15:14; reflection, 15:28), or will (5:12)” (Sid S. Buzzell, “Proverbs,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1, 911). “To regard him [YAHWEH] as the source of wisdom and power in all things and therefore worthy of your entire confidence. The act of trusting is sometimes expressed figuratively as ‘putting your heart in the hands of’ or ‘laying your liver on someone.’ The Lord translates the personal name of Israel’s God, Yahweh. With all your heart means with all your mind, with the full force of the mental faculties, totally and without reservation” (William David Reybun and Euan McG. Fry, *A Handbook on Proverbs*, 73).

v. 5 **LORD** “Beginning in v. 5, the reference to God from v. 4 is explicitly connected to *Yhwh*. It is *Yhwh* whom the wisdom student must trust with his entire heart. Within the structure of Prov 3:1–12 as a whole, v. 5 introduces the middle part of the unit, which is characterized by imperatives that call for particular behaviors toward *Yhwh* (‘trust – fear – honor’; vv. 5, 7, 9). The three verbs describe the complete surrender to *Yhwh*, which occurs in three steps” (Bernd U. Schipper, *Proverbs 1–15: A Commentary on the Book of Proverbs 1:1–15:33*, 130).

v. 5 **own understanding** “Proverbs 3:5 is the only verse in the book of Proverbs in which the word [understanding] has a suffix. Thus, [understanding] is unique in describing that which a person can acquire through reflection and discovery. Verse 5 expresses a position that is already anticipated in the motto of the book of Proverbs (1:7) and finds its dramatic climax in the words of Agur at the end of the book (30:1–14): human insight and wisdom are unreliable; therefore, the wisdom student must turn completely to *Yhwh*. Proverbs 3:5 draws a sharp distinction between human

insight and trusting in God, thus reflecting late prophetic texts. At the same time, a thematic connection is made to an observation from proverbial wisdom: ‘The way of a fool appears straight in his eyes, but one who listens to counsel is wise’ (12:15). One should not interpret 3:5 as a general disparagement of intellect and understanding. Rather, this verse has to do with a fundamental question: Is human insight the point of departure for sapiential reflection [pursuit of wisdom], or does wisdom ultimately come from *Yhwh*? Proverbs 3:5 is unequivocal here and thus resembles a line of thought that is fully expressed in the critical wisdom of the book of Job (Job 33:33) and in the book of Qohelet [Ecclesiastes]” (Schipper, 131).

v. 6 **all your ways** “The statement that a person should recognize *Yhwh* ‘in all one’s ways’ represents a noteworthy inversion of sapiential thought. If sapiential knowledge is based primarily on life experience and observation of the world – that is, ‘empiricism’ – Prov 3:6 offers a different hermeneutical approach. While the empirical determination of sapiential thought is still justified, it ultimately serves the purpose of knowing God. It is not a form of wisdom that can be separated from God. It is precisely in this respect that there is a theological connection between 3:1–12 and the motto of the book of Proverbs in 1:7, which makes the fear of *Yhwh* the starting point for all sapiential learning” (Schipper, 131).

v. 6 **submit** “Literally ‘in all your ways, know him [*da’ehu*].’ As *Hame’iri* says, ‘This is a noble saying, small in quantity but great in quality.’ The tenet that knowledge of God must permeate all one’s behavior is at the core of the message of Prov 1–9, fusing knowledge, piety, and action into one principle. Knowledge of God must be realized in a person’s ways – his behavior – not merely in cognition and certainly not in theological erudition. Knowledge of God is an attitude, awareness of what he wants as well as a desire to do it. To ‘know God in all your ways’ means giving constant attention to the divine will and presence” (Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 18A, Anchor Yale Bible, 149).

v. 6 **straight** “Straight and smooth (cf. 11:5) reveals the pun of this one Hebrew word to denote its physical reality and connote its ethical sense. Figuratively, Alonso-Schökel rightly says that it denotes either ‘straight’ (i.e., *yāšar* ‘right, honest, upright conduct that does not go astray or out of bounds,’ 2:13; 9:15) or ‘smoothness’ (i.e., ‘the success of an undertaking or action’; cf. 3:23; 4:12; Isa. 40:3) [TDOT, 6:466, s.v. *yāšar*]. The structure of 3:1–12 shows that at the least ‘smooth’ is meant here. Since, however, to know the LORD one must abstain from evil for there is no evil in him, that relationship also makes one walk ‘straight’... One has to view the course of one’s life from a bird’s-eye view, not from a worm’s-eye view, to see this truth. A Portuguese proverb says, “God writes straight with crooked lines” (Waltke, 245).

4

APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Cultivate the habit of leaning heavily upon God with all your hopes and dreams. At the same time give low priority to the importance of your own insights and self-realizations. Bring all your situations to God, asking for his wisdom, trusting him to direct your life into his blessings and peace.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

Trying to talk a toddler into doing something you want them to do is fun. About 6% of the time there’s excitement and obedience—a cause for celebration. The other 94% there’s weeping and gnashing of teeth and full-on temper tantrums, usually in the middle of the grocery store for all to see and judge. We try to be patient and lead with mercy and compassion because we know what’s on the other side. We know they’ll be more pleasant if they take a nap or eat lunch. We know that when they put their toys away, we can head out to the zoo or water park for an afternoon of fun. We’ve got the big picture in mind; we just need them to trust in faith that we know what’s best. We need our little humans to submit to our authority. Ouch. This is further proof that God gifts us with family not only for our good pleasure but for our sanctification. How often are we big versions of our toddler (or any age) children? God says, “Go,” and we plant our feet in resistance. God says, “Stay,” and we run as fast as we can into the abyss. God has something better in store for us and we settle for what we know is comfortable and easy. We think we’ve got the best plan but His way is better; it’s trustworthy and true. We’re told in Proverbs 3 not to trust our own way but to trust our Heavenly Father, to submit to Him. Do you struggle with faith or submission? Prayerfully confess this and ask Him to make your path straight.

What Does The Bible Say?	What Do You Think?	What Do You Do?
Read Proverbs 3:5-6 1. How should we trust in the Lord? 2. What should we not lean on? 3. What will God do when we submit to Him?	How does our own understanding interfere with trusting in God?	Walk your dog (or a neighbor’s) and notice how the leash leads him. What would your dog do if they didn’t have the leash?

CORE COMPETENCY: Salvation by Grace

I believe that I become a child of God through faith in Jesus, not because of anything I do.

MEMORY VERSE: Joshua 1:9

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.


Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

_____ I completed my Bible Study

_____ I memorized this week’s verse

_____ I brought my Bible to church

_____ I brought a friend



CHILD’S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)

I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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Stephanie Thomas (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have four children: Elijah, Levi, Ella and Simon. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

The Scrolls Bible Study is a spiritual growth resource of Central Bible Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

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**CENTRAL
BIBLE CHURCH**

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